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ABSTRACT

Proving the efficacy of Hawaii's Poets-in-the-Schools program, this collection of descriptive statements by some of Hawaii's leading poets and teachers of poetry, and accompanied by illustrative poems produced by classroom pupils, describes the theories that were generally accepted as a working basis and the related methods each writer used in the teaching of poetry. Many of the essays also include examples of student poems written during that particular poet's school visit and demonstrate the poet's techniques or approaches. The ten poets are (1) Phyllis Thompson, (2) Caroline Garrett, (3) Eric Chock, (4) Muffie Garbisch, (5) Nell Altizer, (6) Gary Kissick, (7) Audrey Sakihara, (8) Dana Naone, (9) Lorraine Flanders, and (10) Mel Takahara. (NKA)

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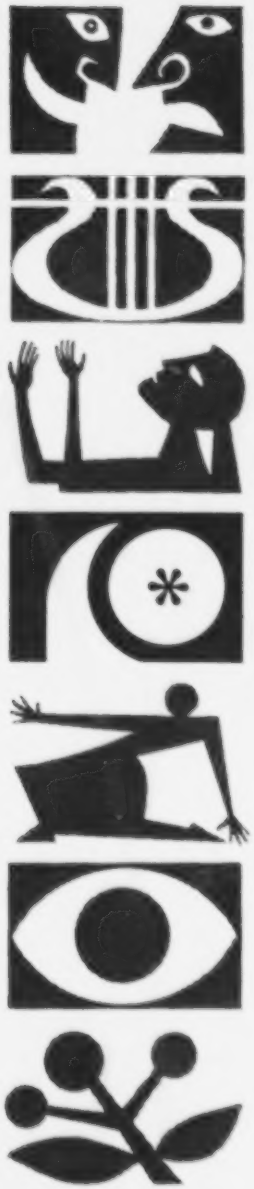

Haku Mele O Hawaii

(Poet of Hawaii)

Volume 1

Edited by
Caroline Garrett

Office of Instructional Services/Regular Education Branch • Department of Education • State of Hawaii • TAC 76-0796 • February 1976

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FOREWORD

This is a book about writing poetry. At the same time, it is an introduction to Hawaii's Poets-in-the-Schools program. For the past nine years, Hawaii's poets have been teaching creative writing workshops in public and private schools throughout the islands. Their purpose has been to encourage students and teachers to write poetry. The task of the poet is to re-invest language with life energy and meaning. This book is a collection of ideas, techniques and poems designed to stimulate this energy.

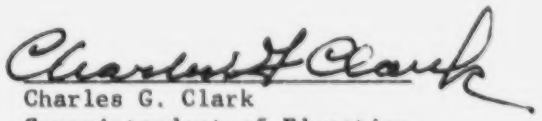
In this book, many minds and voices are brought together. Haku is to compose, put in order, to weave, as a lei. Mele is chant, song or poem. Haku mele means poet. The Haku Mele O Hawaii - The Poet of Hawaii refers, not to one person, but to the many students and teachers and poets who participated in the program from 1973 to 1975 whose poems and words were woven together to become this anthology.

The Haku Mele is organized in this way: in each section a different poet presents his or her own statement of how he works in the classroom. The individual sections of this book are as varied in text and format as the poets themselves. The student poems in each section were written during that poet's visit to a particular school and illustrate the techniques or approaches that were used.

Each poet works in his own way to involve others in the process which concerns him most deeply--that of shaping language to one's own thought, feeling and form. Thus, the poet's own words are used here to demonstrate how and why he succeeds in shaping something new with our oldest tool--language.

What is presented here, then, are the theories that were generally accepted as a working basis and the related methods used in the teaching of poetry. We hope it also reflects in the poems the transforming energy of each individual personality at play with language as the creative medium.

It is hoped that this small book will be the beginning of a growing work--to bring the words and poems of Hawaii's writers to one another--a growing chorus of voices, the children of these islands, a mele of many lives. This is only Volume I.



Charles G. Clark
Superintendent of Education

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and all of the participating poets, students, teachers, principals.

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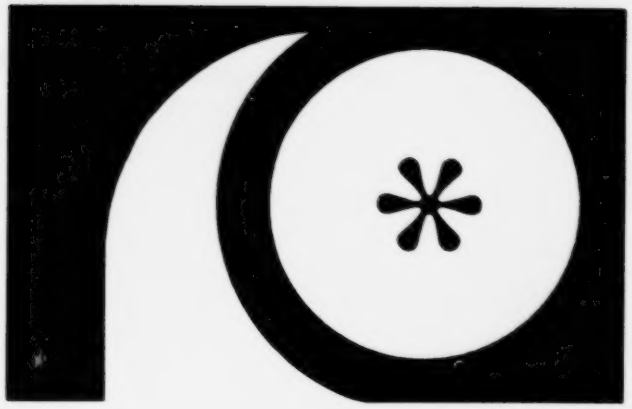


Phyllis Thompson

The way taken by true poems is from the deepness of the poet's self outward through language that speaks to someone listening. That deepness of self is the poet's own vital experience, whatever that experience be, whether of trees or oceans, books or parents, lovers or salt, or all of these together.

What we, as visiting poets, tried to do was to reach and touch the deepness or inner space of the students we worked with so as to set something in motion inside, something alive which would respond to us with poems. Some of us created techniques for doing this, some of us had nothing but poems and ourselves speaking truly. Both approaches worked.

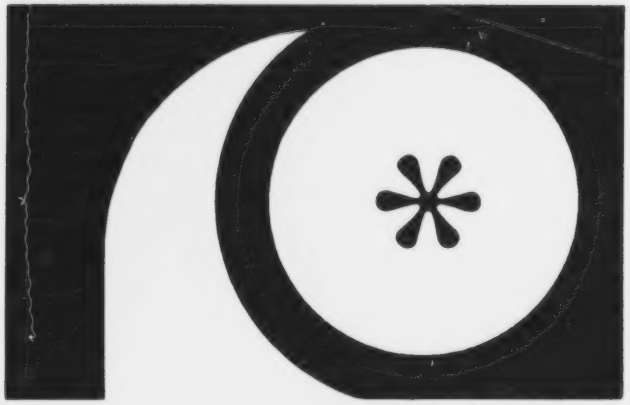
The medium of the response was language - the single unavoidable element in poetry, since it is clearly the artist's only absolutely necessary material. It is also the material that most students feel most uncomfortable using, for a lot of reasons. One is fear of making what are called mistakes. One is fear of self-exposure. One is fear of not being able to say enough well enough and truly enough about what is felt inside. To overcome the discomfort, we worked out a great number of techniques which could be called word games. These are not strictly separable from the techniques of reaching inwardness, especially since free association to words inevitably reveals a good deal about the self. The distinction between self-awareness techniques and language techniques is that the classroom emphasis in using the latter was on language, not the self. Words thought of as simply objects to play with are not so scary as when they are thought of either as avenues into the self or as elements of that formidable subject, "English."

Even in poets, word play leads to poems. Therefore, much of what the students wrote in play bears a strong resemblance to "real" poetry or art. Some of the visiting poets used techniques which emphasized the poetry, the conscious art of language, the achievement of form in words. Such techniques often produced work which was both consciously formal and true to the feeling which demanded expression.

The final step in the process is the poem. Representative poems written within the scope of the Poets-in-the-Schools program appear in this booklet as illustrations of the methods used by the poets. But far more important was the poem in the classroom. The poets often dittoed the work they wanted the other students to see, and the students were invited to share what they had done. Often handwritten poems, poem-collages, illustrated poems, were displayed on the walls and bulletin boards of the classrooms. Sometimes the poet and one or several teachers worked together to produce a handsome pamphlet collection of poetry. The students like to see their work in print, even if "print" means only a purple ditto sheet hunt-and-pecked out by a poet on an old typewriter.

The descriptive statements that follow, along with the illustrative poems, represent our own desire to see our work in print, so that it can be imitated and improved upon by other poets and teachers of poetry; so that, even though, with the passing of time, all of those who took part can never take part in exactly the same way again; the good things all of us did will not be lost to those who care seriously about workable ways of teaching poetry.

15 Phyllis Thompson began the Poets-in-the-Schools program in Hawaii in 1966 and her dedication is largely responsible for its continuing growth and success. 16



Caroline Garrett

No two classes are the same. And in the class-
room, I never do exactly the same thing twice.
My approach to generating poetry in the class-
room is always changing and evolving. There is
surely no set formula - but there are several
elements which, for me, are always a part of the
process we call poetry-in-the-schools.

the trees moaning
the grass chirping
the dry leaf wanders
away from the pile

above
birds are singing
some are fighting;
a piece of french-fry
fell to the ground
the wind blows leaves
over the french-fry
and the birds have nothing.

the buildings nearby
watching
shut their louvers
in their disappointment.

Laurie
Honokaa
The Big Island

Any new person in the classroom creates a change the moment he enters. I see myself as a source of energy. I try to stir things up - loosening the system, encouraging the students to re-experience themselves and the world around them. We do some yoga, take a walk, listen to poetry or music. The stimuli can take the form of ideas or objects - but the point is always to generate energy. Then, once the customary patterns and structures are disrupted or removed, I introduce new structures to re-orient the energies toward the writing process.

We might play a word game, or do any one of many writing exercises designed to get the words flowing onto paper. Some of my favorite ways of doing this are the word chains of associations, important words, and word combinations. (Descriptions of these techniques follow.) I think that these tricks are essential - and great for getting everyone involved - but they are not enough.

The third facet of the process seems to me the most difficult and the most vital, if poetry is going to happen. Once a technique has been introduced that gets everyone into the process of trying to write, I move around the room to each person, trying to be as open and sensitive as I can to their process - making a response to what they are doing. I really try to intervene or focus their writing where I find the greatest vitality or potential. It is amazing how much can happen when you say, "That is important (or interesting), can you write more about that." Sometimes a line just jumps out and I say, "Wow, that is exciting, make that your first line." This part of the process requires an incredible amount of attention and energy because I have to trust myself and be able to respond to each person I meet on the paper, using myself as the instrument and attempting, in each case, to begin a dialogue.

Once the papers are written, I go through them, selecting the strongest poems or lines - typing them, and returning them to the class, thus generating more excitement and energy and beginning the whole process over again.

WORD CHAINS:
The first thing I say to the students is that we're going to do some new things with words. I tell them that they are the poets and can make words do whatever they want them to do. I pass out some unlined paper, commenting that the words can go anywhere - all over - there are no rules about how the words are supposed to be placed on their paper. And they don't have to worry about spelling and punctuation while I'm in the classroom. Stopping to struggle with how to spell a word can break the flow of thought or feeling. In all of these ways I'm trying to let them know that words can be played with...that language is theirs to manipulate. I want to encourage a sense of power and control over language (instead of feeling overwhelmed by it). The idea that words can go together in different ways, and with these new combinations new ideas and energies be released, is the sense of power I am referring to. Not power in the sense of mastery of the craft, but power that, in poems, they, and not some external set of rules, determine how to say things.

Next, I simply state that poems are made of words, and that it is easiest to begin with just one word - any word - somewhere (anywhere!) on that blank page in front of them. I wait and walk around until everyone has gotten a word written down. Then I go to the board and write a word there, say: "dust." I explain that the great thing about a word is that it always makes you think of another word. I ask, "What does 'dust' make you think of?" Silence. Then a voice ventures ... "dirt." I write "dirt" on the board. "O.K., now what does 'dirt' make you think of?" Someone says, "mud."

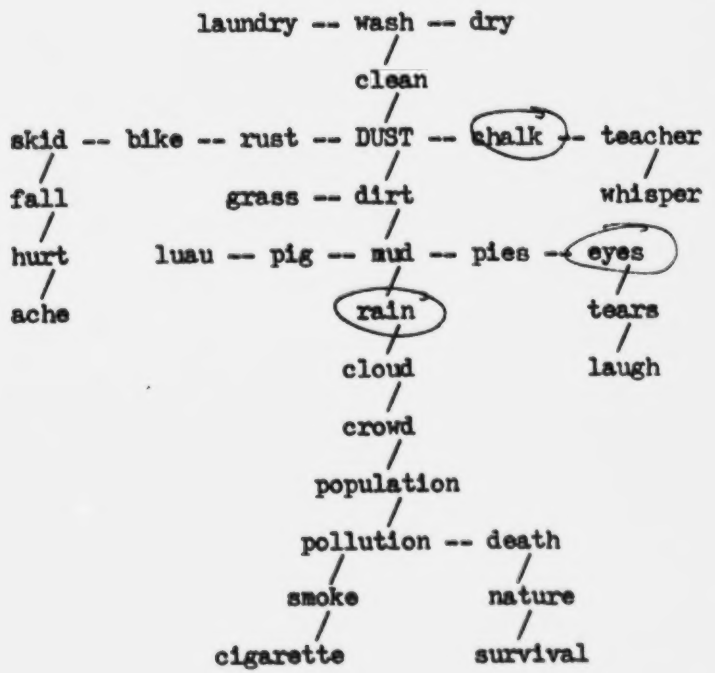
i see your voice
it comes out
like ripples
on the water
when a pebble
gets
dropped
in.

it comes out
like notes
on a sheet
f m s i
o u c.

it looks like
cubes of ice
in a frosty glass
of lemonade.

Gaye, seventh grade
Kalanianaole School
The Big Island

WORD CHAIN



Another says, "grass." I write these on the board. And I continue to ask what each new word brings to their minds, writing faster as they gain speed at making associations, until the momentum is greater than I can maintain, and the board is covered with words. Then I ask them to look at the word they wrote on their paper - and begin the process for themselves. With the younger students, I suggest making a word-chain of associations that can wind all over the paper and branch out in many directions. The visual effect of a chain of words is appealing, and once they get going they don't want to stop. After only ten minutes, most students have quite a few words.

I think this process of spontaneous association is an important element of poetry. It is also easier to begin to write when, suddenly, there is a whole page of words which suggest ideas, and not a blank paper.

IMPORTANT WORDS:
Now that the kids have a bunch of words to work with, lots of things can happen. I next ask them to select the words that they feel are the important words on their paper. I don't say what "important" means...just whatever words are the important ones to them at that time. They mark these words. Usually no one asks what I mean. Each child has his own sense of which words are important - to him. As they are choosing their words, I go to the board and pick out some important words from the chain written there. Say, from the list to the left, I choose "eyes," "chalk" and "rain." (It is best to choose concrete nouns - if I see a child with "freedom" and "beauty" I explain what "concrete" is and help them find some concrete words.)

This facet of the exercise requires that the students refer to their own sense of values. Unconsciously or consciously, each person, child or adult, has a sense of "importance" which determines the immediacy and power with which he chooses language to mirror the self.

WORD COMBINATIONS:

I ask the students to pick three of their important words and write them on the back of the paper. On a clean section of the black board I write: eyes, chalk, and rain. I ask them what I can say with these words. Usually someone suggests a rather conventional sentence like, "My eyes saw chalk and rain." O.K., what else can I say with these three words? "I got chalk and rain in my eyes." What if I say, "It rained chalk eyes?" OHHHH. Smiles. You mean we can say anything? ...It doesn't have to make sense? We can add other words? We can change the form of the words? YES, yes, and yes!!!

The children are asked to experiment with their own three words...mix them up...add new endings, and think of all the possible (and impossible!) things they might say combining the three words in different ways on their papers. It takes a little time for them to loosen up -- but once they realize that it is really all right to stretch the words and meanings as far as they like, they plunge into the process. Once they've gotten the idea, I tell them to use any three words they might want to try out.

This playing with words - arranging them, shuffling them, and finding various combinations of ways they can go together to create a new or unexpected idea, is another important element of poetry. It is in just this way that they may create an idea that becomes the seed of a poem.

Once they've gotten a number of combinations on the paper, I ask them to choose the idea they like the best. Most students know immediately which one appeals to them- because it is funny or new or profound. If they are uncertain and ask me, I tell them which lines I like - and my reasons. I ask them to take the line they've chosen and make that their first line - and write about it -- to try to keep the idea growing...and growing.

At this point, I say, please <u>don't write a poem</u> - just

With a shriveled mouth
And lemon watering face
Both camelings sourly walked
    To the oasis.
Perplexly eyeing camelings
Did away with their
Lemoning-mouthed camel look
And gradually reached the stars
    To where
Camelmouthings
    Wander to.

Maureen
A ninth grade student
Waiakea Intermediate,
Hilo

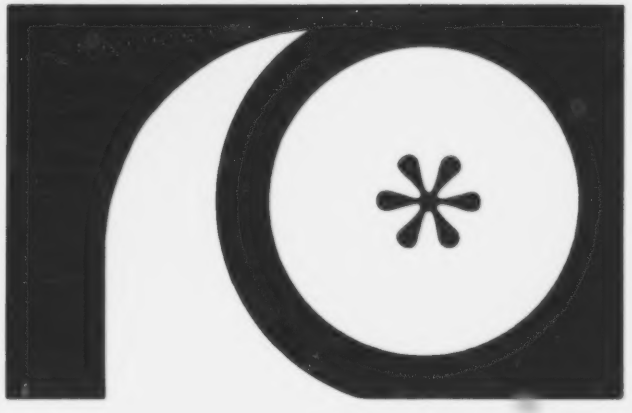
Father's hand is soft
Like a pillow
He do many things with his hand
He pick small fruits from a tree
With a knife that is sharp and long
        I just have to tell you
That my father tells secrets to his hand.

Lidia, a sixth grader
Kalanianaole School
The Big Island

my mother watches
the honey shadow light
at the end of the valley's silence
there she sits and dreams
about an old window
that reminds her of shame

A fifth grader
Liliuokalani School

write your ideas, we will write poems later. I say this because at first, many students have a rather restricted idea of what a poem is. For example, they begin a rhyme pattern that inevitably constricts the idea they began with. Telling them <u>not</u> to write a <u>poem</u> keeps the possibilities open. I believe that if the idea is written out freely and spontaneously, as it occurs, it can later be re-worked and shaped into a poem. And then, in the "shaping", the first line may even become the last!



Eric Chock

The Poets-in-the-Schools program by its very title implies something unusual in the educational system, and each time I enter the classroom I am aware of this fact. On one hand, I can be seen as a person who plays the role of the poet, reading and talking about poems and poetry writing. On the other hand . . . . . .

my love when are
you coming to school
And when are you
taking me out
to dinner and
to go to see my
grandfather
he will cut
out his leg
and he thinks
Something
is going to
happen to
him so
let him
get well
soon and
watch over
my Grandma
She is very
weak so watch
over her and
my family

an 8th grader
Hilo Intermediate

I can be seen as a kind of resource person, bringing the skills of the craft of poetry. In each case the essential purpose of my visit is the same --- to bring the experience of poetry alive. But the methods and approach I take in leading each class depends upon which aspects I wish to focus on.

If I focus on the role of poet, I will probably talk about what poetry means to me. I will read poems, either my own or favorites of mine from other poets. The factor of being a poet is important, but probably more significant is the value placed on the communication of personally meaningful things. I will read poems for a few minutes. The choice of poems depends to some extent on age level, but they need not be so-called "children's poems." For instance, people of any age can appreciate poems about love as long as they can comprehend the vocabulary and syntax. If the poems are mine, or if I'm familiar with them, I will talk about them --- the circumstances surrounding the writing, any special ideas or techniques focused on, etcetera. Then

I will give the class five minutes of free writing time to write whatever they want. In this, as in all kinds of initial writing, there are no rules of grammar that must be followed. The important thing is to keep the flow of ideas and feelings and images going. If I have been successful in my evocation, the poems I read or something I said about them will have made some sort of connection in the students. The free writing time allows them the opportunity to let some of these associations onto the page, perhaps as a spontaneous overflowing of emotions. It often feels as though the students who write well in this process are those who are personally reciprocating the intensity of feeling that the poet put into the creation of the poem, or that the reader re-expressed in the classroom.

Even if this kind of evocative process does not produce poems from everyone, it is still important simply because reading and listening to poems is an integral part of the experience of poetry. Admittedly, the evocative experience is a subjective one and the

In my body
there are caves
leading to different places.
I see blood and nothing but blood and dark.
Sometimes I see bones.
And veins and meat.
I am scared to be in the dark
so I think of my dog Pierre who died of
heartbroken.
He's a poodle and is not supposed to be
alone.
I let him go and he walked out of the gate.
Usually he runs.
I cried and cried
and I cannot forget about him.
My best dog I ever had for a long time.
Now I only have my cat Timothy
who is still a kitten that would want to
mate.
And that's why I feel so lonely inside
of my great big body.
Nobody to love and care for.
Nothing but dark and death.
Sometimes I miss my father who left me
in Kindergarten. I visit him in summer.
He has his own family.
Now I am nothing to him.
But a body of dark and blood.
I live with my mother
who cares for me.
What else can anybody expect.

a 5th grader
Waipahu Elementary

one day I met a dog named

Snoozer Q

He was a very Jumbo yellow shoe dog...

A soft nose hobo came along

and met Snoozer Q

And Snoozer Q bit his nose

till it was gloomy and dark red

And the hobo said you better leave

me alone

You mop head Oriental Noodle Nose.

Sheila, 6th grade
Waipahu Elementary

poems written in response are often effusive and of a confessional nature. It becomes apparent that elements of the craft of poetry must be introduced.

Given the short amount of time allotted to each class, little of the technical aspects of poetry writing can be focused on. One of the things I may do is an exercise focusing on sounds of words. Everyone is asked to think of words with a certain sound or letter in them, for example, words with o's or 'o' sounds. As these are recited in turn around the class the students are asked to copy them down on their papers. I ask them to feel the sounds of the words as they are spoken. When everyone has twenty or thirty words on his page, they are asked to make up three or more separate lines using as many words from their lists as possible, although other words are allowed also. When this is done, the students are asked to pick one of the lines they have made and use it as the beginning of a poem.

There are variations on this process. The words can be limited to nouns and verbs which are more important

than prepositions or adjectives. Or instead of sounds, the process can be applied to images so that each person is asked to give one image and lines will contain as many images as possible. The process is still based in associations the students make, whether he is associating words through sounds, or images with each other. In either case, it is helpful prior to the exercise to read some poems which demonstrate the given quality to be focused on. It always helps a student's confidence to have a model to imitate.

Different approaches work differently with each student. Not all will be able to write finished poems in the short span of two or three weeks which we are allotted. It is important for me to move around the class as the students are writing to make comments or respond to questions as much as possible. Students often need guidance as to what lines are good, what are good places to begin a poem, which lines are superfluous to the main flow. This kind of advice is often necessary for the student to maintain a genuine feeling or level

I live in a pocket with shells
for my roof,
And crabs for my scissors with flowers
on their backs.

Janine, 3rd grade
Liholiho Elementary

I have a black finger
and every day I eat my finger
because it's chocolate
and easy to bite and grows back
every day.

Corrine, 3rd grade
Liholiho Elementary

Quiet Finding

How Quiet Is Quiet

Is quiet like the rustling desert trail
Is it like out at sea by yourself
Or is it out in the graveyard by yourself
Or is it walking in your soul finding,
finding
But you do not know what you're
finding

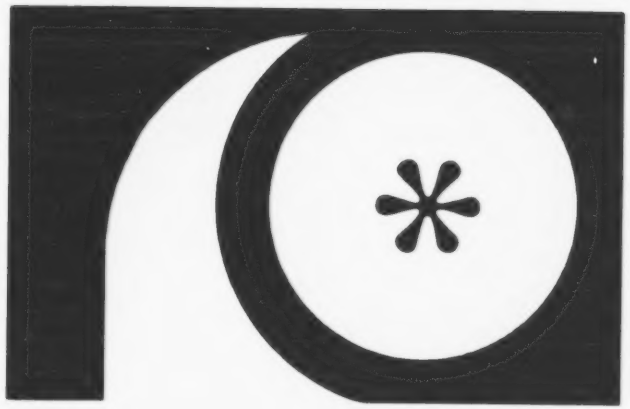
Are you finding for your lost friend
Or are you finding for a face that you
did not know

Find, find.

Earl, 6th grade
Waipahu Elementary

of intensity in what he writes.

Free writing has a drawback in that poems are sometimes overly subjective, perhaps sentimental or too esoteric for others to understand. Exercises and word play will sometimes present the opposite problem, for if the student fails to make significant associations between the words or images he assembles on his paper, the lines he composes will probably lack spark. I try to balance these two opposing elements. After every class I go over each paper and write responses and comments, keeping this dichotomy in mind. In any case, I mimeograph the good poems to hand out and read in class. This is to complete and continue the cycle, for the purpose is still the same --- to bring the experience of poetry alive, both through writing and hearing poems in the classroom.



Muffie Garbisch

My primary goal with all the classes was to involve as many of the kids as possible in writing, and in enjoying writing. By the final session, almost every student was writing regularly, and a few were bringing me work they had done at home.

IN THE FIRST SESSION, I READ THEM THEODORE ROETHKE'S "THE BAT." I ASKED THEM TO WRITE ABOUT "TURNING INTO AT NIGHT" - TO IMAGINE WHAT THEY, OR THEIR BODIES, OR THEIR FRIEND, OR ANY OBJECT, MIGHT TURN INTO AT NIGHT. THEY WERE VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE SUBJECT. THIS IS A GOOD EXERCISE TO USE TO GET THE KIDS HAPPY ABOUT WRITING FROM THE START, AS IT GIVES THEM A LOT OF IMAGINATIVE LEEWAY, AND THEY ALWAYS HAVE SOME GOOD NIGHTMARE OR HUMOROUS IDEAS THAT THEY ENJOY WRITING OUT -- A GOOD FIRST-DAY EXERCISE FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KIDS. AT THE END OF THIS CLASS, I READ SEVERAL OF THEIR PIECES OUT LOUD. I TRIED TO DO THIS WHENEVER TIME ALLOWED, AS NOTHING ENCOURAGES THE KIDS AS MUCH AS FEEDBACK.

"TURNING INTO AT NIGHT"

The Egg Monster

In the icebox are eggs
and one of them at midnight grows some legs.
He crawls out of the icebox and grows some wings
and grows hair and other yuchie things.
He goes out and the people go mad
because he sucks blood, it looks so bad.
Then he charges for Gerald
he starts to scream because he looks so mean.
Then the egg starts to peck
and blood oozes out of Gerald's neck.
He looks at the clock and returns
to the old ice box.

NOTE: All poems in this section were written by 4th, 5th or 6th graders at Liliuokalani Elementary School.

In another session, I decided to give them the notion of form as limitations within which you work, and as something to encourage happy accidents. I put the requirements for several five-line poems on the board. For example:

1st line - Use a color word.
2nd line - Use the word "moss."
3rd line - Use the word "fur."
4th line - Free! Use anything.
5th line - Use the word "light."

I put on the board a poem I had written using this particular pattern, as an example. They were very excited about the assignment and many wrote several poems. One child used all four of the patterns on the board to make one long poem; another chose elements from each pattern.

"FORM POEMS"

Slithering in the aquamarine pool
as I watch closely the green spongy moss
At first I thought it was a spot of fur,
so I started staring as I slither
in the aquamarine pool ...

Paul
grade 5

A variation:

MOSS IS LIKE FUR IN THE AQUAMARINE,
FREE WORDS ARE LIGHT AS SCARLET.

Daniel
grade 5

I ALWAYS ENCOURAGED INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN TO MAKE MODIFICATIONS OF THE ASSIGNMENT IF I FELT THEY WANTED MORE ROOM TO BE IMAGINATIVE.

On another day, the children wrote about the dreams of others. They could either imagine what things or other people might dream, such as, "The snake dreams of legs", or write about one particular dream; as, "my friend dreams about me." This was initially confusing for them because of the choice allowed, so next time I would just have them handle the assignment in one of these ways. I'd choose the first, because most were a little young to write a long single assignment imagining what someone or something else might dream.

A bill dreams of coins.
A calendar dreams of dates.
The sun dreams about darkness.
Winter dreams about summer.
Ghosts dream about being alive.
Ears dream about earrings.
The Valentine dreams about love.
Granny bag dreams about a granny.
Odd dreams about ends.
Bong bong dreams about clang, clang.
Wishes dreams about having a wish or a dream.
Sweat dreams about Arrid Extra Dry.
Ball dreams about a bald head.
Bald head dreams of hair.

Lynn
grade 4

I dreamed I was...
At night I dreamed I was in a pocket
in a closet in the house,
and in the pocket I am a little
buffalo head nickel.
I am going to be spent by noon
and the little pocket will be empty.

Norma
grade 4

THE KIDS SHOWED A TENDENCY TOWARDS FORMALISM FROM THE START. THEY WERE FIERCE RHYMERS. I ACTUALLY HAD TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM RHYMING IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE IMAGINATIVE WORK AND AVOID STALE CAT-BAT-RAT PIECES.

I brought in Jorge Luis Borges' Book of Imaginary Beings and read several selections. I asked them to invent their own being, describe it and its habitat, tell what people thought about it and what it thought about itself. The kids responded well to this assignment . . . . . .

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IMAGINARY BEINGS

Nik a Chu

The Nik a Chu gives you horrible, frightful nightmares. Sometimes when you wake up, you can turn into what you were dreaming about for one day.
The Nik a Chu lives in a dark cave. He's always thinking of nightmares and frightful monsters for you to turn into.
People think that the only way to escape from it is to stay awake for two days and eat horseradish during them.
A person around 15 tried to look at it. He waited and waited, then suddenly from behind, the Nik a Chu appeared with 10 frightful arms and legs, 3 horrible looking eyes and fish scales all around him. He had horns the size of an elephant tusk. He was just about to escape when he became paralyzed. He began to melt like ice. All that was left of him was his skull and some bones and blood spilling out of it until there was not a speck of him left.

Jee-Eun
grade 5

The Horrible, The Beautiful Devigel

My beast is half devil, half angel.
It is half g[illegible]d and half bad.
It is also half pretty and half ugly,
and of course, it's half boy
and half girl.
Its color is red and blue.
It makes a hissing kind of noise.
It casts love spells on pretty angel girls
and it casts hate spells on ugly devil boys.
When devigel sees people,
first he always acts angelish
then devilish.

To me, to be that beast
it would be half fun
and half not fun.

Lorna
grade 6

I DECIDED TO ASK THE KIDS TO WRITE DIRECTLY ABOUT THEMSELVES, THROUGH THEIR MEMORIES. I READ AN "I REMEMBER" POEM FROM KENNETH KOCH'S WISHES, LIES & DREAMS. THEY THEN WROTE:

My Good Memories of Childhood...

I remember when I was born

and I remember all the things I had,

such as, a bottle, crib, and

all kinds of other things.

I remember when I was thrown out

into the water by my father,

and almost drowned.

I remember how old I am,

and who I am,

and what I am.

I remember how I look,

how I learn, how I speak and how I live.

I mostly remember that I'm a girl.

Renee
grade 6

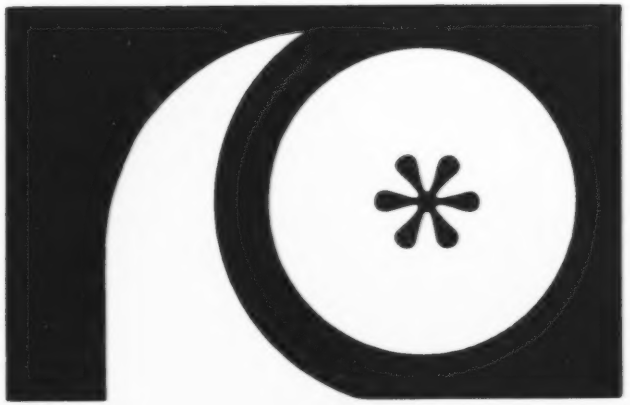
I remember When...

I remember when our house was knocked down
and a new one was built.
Memories of a trip with my grandma
that was fun, but I was away from my parents
for a few weeks. I remember the time
I came to school with a pair of shoes
Too big for me when I was in kindergarten.
That day I had a hard time walking.
When I transferred from a private school
to this school, I was going to 3rd grade
I didn't know who a single person was
and I felt like crying.
I remember when my baby brother was born
There is a best time that I'll never forget:
the times I spent with my pal, Alyson,
We spend much time together on weekends.

Kristy
grade 6

INCIDENTALLY, I ALWAYS GOT A GOOD RESPONSE FROM CLASSES WHEN I READ WORK BY KIDS THEIR AGE, OR EVEN WORK DONE BY OTHER KIDS AT LILIUOKALANI. THEY RESPOND EAGERLY TO A MODEL, SO I RECOMMEND DOING THIS WHENEVER SUITABLE WORK CAN BE FOUND.

I THINK I DID RIGHT IN KEEPING MY ASSIGNMENTS AS OPEN AS POSSIBLE - OF COURSE, ALWAYS BEING LIMITED BY THE FACT THAT TOTAL FREEDOM PARALYZES THE IMAGINATION FOR MOST KIDS: THEY NEED A DEFINITE JUMPING-OFF PLACE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY DO AIM TO PLEASE.



Nell Altizer

THE WORD BAG

We used an exercise which consists of cutting up words from magazine advertisements (nouns and verbs only), putting them in a paper sack and having the children reach in for a handful of words.

The exercise works for a variety of reasons: first of all, it's fun and exciting and suspenseful to pull words out of a paper sack and then to discover that something begins to take shape as separate words are arranged and re-arranged, discarded or swapped with a classmate.

THERE'S NO NEED TO ERASE: A WORD PLACED ONE WAY CAN BE CHANGED OR RE-ORDERED WITHOUT MESSING UP THE PAPER (PARALYZING TO SOME CHILDREN), SINCE THE FINAL PASTEUP IS NOT DONE UNTIL THE CHILD SHAPES THE WORDS TO HER OR HIS FINAL SATISFACTION.

Moreover, the vocabulary is given; the child works with words piled up on the desk in front of her as she would with clay. There is not the frequent disclaimer: I can't think of anything to write about. Some students used only the words they had grabbed from the WORD BAG; others included many of their own words. Many began with their pile of words and ended with their own written words as they became more and more in control of the composition.

WHEN THEY FOUND THEY PUT TOGETHER COMBINATIONS OF NOUNS AND VERBS NEITHER THEY NOR THE INSTRUCTORS COULD HAVE DREAMED OF AND FOUND THAT THEY MADE A FUNNY OR STRANGE, OFTEN PROFOUND SENSE THEY WERE DELIGHTED INDEED. THIS WAS AN EXERCISE THAT NO ONE HAD TROUBLE WITH AND THE FINISHED PRODUCT WAS OFTEN A WORK OF VISUAL AS WELL AS VERBAL ART, ONE THAT COULD BE PUT UP ON THE WALL LIKE A PAINTING.

NOTE: All poems in this section were written at Nuuanu Elementary School.

Poems from the WORD BAG
(Underlined words indicate those from the bag)

The dogs are painting the forest
with the best gift from the owl
The colors are made from
the world's best science potion.
In the painting it is dry and cold.
It is quiet like the moon.
On the moon there is a garden,
candles and flowers are some things
that are planted there.

-Cathy

High-rises
make
homes
small

-Stephanie

While crossing the garden of snow and
wilderness, I, ho-hum, came upon
a new a beautiful jam session.
Truthfully, I was a fool not to go
back to my cool blanket. Now, the law
must treat my wounds with flavored pears!

-Angel

In a royal month
millions were being killed
on some cruises.
Nothing could stop this
breath-taking energy
like a springing mase in the ocean
or like a slender blood-red hand.

-Alan

It was a new morning for the world.
It was one of those happy days on Saturday,
the blossoms were like roses
and it was just
like autumn. I watched the birds and the
rabbits running across the yard and
chewing on my vegetables so I jerked up
a hoe and I but now there's nothing
inside me that would smash a rabbit.
It started to rain a big rainbow
timber across the Arctic
It's so good to be alive.

words by Allan

Terrific love is like an onion 50% off.

-Alan

Authentic Hawaii ocean
Shadows comforting thought
Human peace
Sun miracle thrills brains

-Kim

IN A FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE CLASS, I FIRST WROTE MY NAME ON THE BOARD (I HAD NOT MET THE CLASS PREVIOUSLY, SO THIS WAS A GOOD WAY OF INTRODUCTION) AND THEN ASKED IF WE COULD TOGETHER FIND WHAT VEGETABLE, FRUIT, TREE, FLOWER, ANIMAL, COLOR WAS INSIDE MY NAME. THE CHILDREN, QUITE INTRIGUED WITH THE NOTION THAT WORDS AND THINGS LIVED INSIDE NAMES, RESPONDED FREELY, AND AFTER THEY HAD AGREED THAT CELERY AND LEMON AND GREEN WERE IN MY NAME (NELL), I WAS ABLE TO EXPLAIN LIGHTLY HOW WE ASSOCIATE WORDS OFTEN ON THE BASIS OF THEIR SOUNDS AND THAT SUCH ASSOCIATION IS A GOOD WAY TO SHAPE A POEM.

From Lena's name:
Laughing
Long Beans
Larva
Lemons
Yellow
Lilac
Lioness
Lichee Tree

WRITING POEMS TO MUSIC: We played some quite unusual music from Peru played on ancient Peruvian instruments (Urumba), which the children had not heard before, and asked them to write whatever came to their minds, how they felt, what they saw, what the music seemed to be saying. The exercise had a quieting, dreamy effect on the students which the more noisy exercises like Word Bag didn't and opened them to the awareness that poetry was still and meditative as well as exciting rollicking.

MUSIC MAKES ME THINK OF...

A person dancing in Japan
and a bird comes
and then a whole flock of birds come.

-Alan

I saw - A town that has been destroyed
by a tornado.

People dancing.
The dead army men on a battle
field.

A family moving.

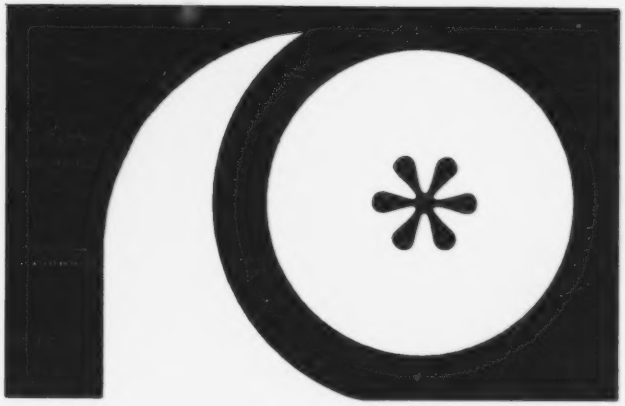
-Berwyn

It's like an elephant catching a
rolling peanut. The peanut rolls
all over the place and it rolls into
a town and the elephant knocks down all
the houses. The peanut never stops rolling.

-Julie

In a Mexican village, someone is
practicing his guitar.

-Charlene



Gary Kissick

I am a car
  I can go up to any speed
  I let nothing bother me
at all

Gerry, a fourth grader
Holy Trinity School

That's it, that's poetry. What we did at Holy Trinity was to try to create an atmosphere where a student could feel free to write something like that and then encourage him to do so. It wasn't difficult ....

...the students were accustomed to a very good teacher, and she did a good advance promotion job so that the kids were torn between polite attentiveness and boiling over with enthusiasm the first day we arrived. After about five minutes of getting to know each other, the enthusiasm won out and it continued to boil all the time we were there. What energy these kids have! And let me say that they were beautiful, fantastic people!

The introductory poem came out of an activity during the class when we taught students near-rhyme and internal rhyme. This might have something to do with why "speed" rhymes with "me" and it might not. The assignment was to write an "I AM" poem, in which they were to transform themselves into some other object, or animal, and use the rather sophisticated techniques we had just taught them. The students were confused at first, but they caught on fast. This was the only class in which we actually had technical considerations which we wanted to teach the students. For the most part we wanted to give them what Kenneth Koch calls "poetry ideas," and this we did through the following activities:

We used Koch's idea of introducing the students to William Carlos Williams' "This Is Just To Say" and asked them to write a poem in which they apologized for doing something they weren't really sorry about.

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I have eaten your bones
That were in the dog house,
And which you were probably
Saving for a midnight snack.
Forgive me, they were
Delicious: so tasty
and so warm.

Matt, a sixth grader
Holy Trinity School

I'm sorry, I really am;
forgive me please, honest I am.
I couldn't help it,
I couldn't resist.
But now I forgot what
I was so sorry about, so
I take back all my sorries
for another time.

Renee, a sixth grader
Holy Trinity School

The students wrote about an abstract painting I did and brought to class. This assignment was preceded by a discussion of the five senses, and after the students wrote one free association poem, we asked them to write a poem in which they described how the painting tasted or felt. The painting is mostly pink, blue and happy. I call it "Light Tune on a Piano". This was a very successful assignment. Surprisingly enough, it got them into specifics.

Express
Lines going everywhere
all sorts of colors, blue
Pink, black, white grey.
Like lines of cars on a
Highway--going very slow.
Hear the motors strutting,
trying to move -- Smog is
Your mouth and eyes.

Thuresa, a fifth grader
Holy Trinity School

Space age candy shop, hot
Chocolate slithering out
like a slug with candy bars.

A fifth grader
Holy Trinity School

Two sessions were spent in sound exercises, the object being to demonstrate that different types of sound produce different effects even though they may lack denotative value. On the first day I read and passed out copies of Lewis Carroll's famous nonsense poem, "Jabberwocky" - I then asked the students to give me a specific explication of the poem. As soon as they realized the freedom that they had, they became actively engaged in this project, and came up with some vivid and imaginative explanations of "Twas brillig and the slithy toves," etc. I introduced the concept of portmanteau words, two words combined to create a new word, ie. toves are animals which are ½ toad and ½ dove. They made their own portmanteaus and then tried to guess the elements that went into the making of each other's portmanteaus.

GROUDS - GREY & CLOUDS

PANGO - a stomach pain caused
by pickled mango

We asked the fourth graders to define words in the dictionary, for example, nyctalopia. One student defined '', "hat's when you nick your finger thumbing through the N to O volume of the encyclopedia." The actual dictionary meanings always proved disappointing.

USING THIS TECHNIQUE, POETS IN DIFFERENT SCHOOLS LEARNED:

NOXIOUS - the way N[illegible]xon
spelled hi[illegible] name
when he was small.

A sixth grader
Island Paradise Annex

RHINOSCOPY - a funny kind of scope
to see rhinos from many miles.

A sixth grader
Liliuokalani School

- a rhino with a copy of himself.

Joseph, sixth grade
Liliuokalani School

OBLIVION - to pay for things two years after.

Miles, fifth grade
Keaau, Big Island

- a place in Long Beach.

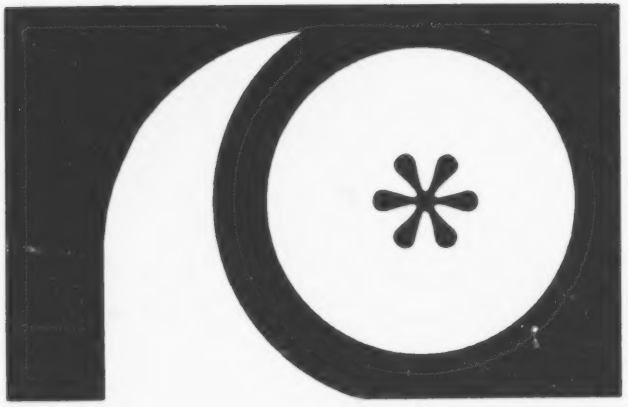
Tony, a fifth grader
Kealakehe, Kona

- a person who has an extra eye.

Lori & Gayleen, grade 5
Keaau, Big Island

ANTEDILUVIAN - when you see ants coming for you in a number you can't say,
just say there must be antediluvian of them.

Sixth graders at Liliuokalani School



Audrey Sakihara

Poetry is thought images. As long as I can remember, I have seen things, physical things like a hibiscus tree, as representations of something else. The hibiscus on the tree, for example, blows with the wind, its petals closing forward, It is not the hibiscus I see now, but instead, a young girl walking in the direction of the wind, her hair blowing forward, covering her face.

Kwan Yin

The statue is as curvy as a snake
And the statue is as white as paper
It is lumpy as a rock
It is as short as a ruler
It smells like the air
The smell makes me feel like an angel

A sixth grader
Kalihi Uka Elementary

Shell

The color of it reminds me of the ocean bottom where the shells and the reefs look wonderful. The softness of it and the little roughness on the bottom reminds me of a very soft hand closed-up to form a fist which looks like my object. The smell smells like the ocean. This object makes me feel like I'm floating.

Ipo
Kalihi Uka

I selected four articles from home for the sixth graders and divided the class into fours. The students had to write a poem about one object, and they were free to move into other groups. I had them list the physical qualities of the object first and then write. The objects were a Kwan Yin, a shell, a red teapot, and a red anthurium. The purpose of this type of poem was to show how words can paint mental pictures through image, and they were told to write about them so well that someone could see it mentally. To prepare for this poem, they all wrote ten lines using a simile or a metaphor the night before. This was to show distinctions in abstract words or colors, and to be as clear as possible in descriptions.

Whenever I'd get ready to leave a class, I'd tell them what kind of poem we would be writing next time. The homework was always to be thinking of the next poem to be written. This is because a lot of time spent in writing a poem is spent in just thinking.

I believe my function was more than just a poetry teacher but to show how poetic concepts work in all life's happenings and in all the different levels of academics. The good sounding line will work in all kinds of writings -- the developed symbols will work as well in a book review as a poem. I wanted to leave the students with the idea that communication can be further enhanced and strengthened through sound and thought.

Above all, I tried to reinforce the idea of trying. What is really exciting is the process of writing. There is no failure in the attempt because so much is explored, opened up, tasted.

Banana Tree

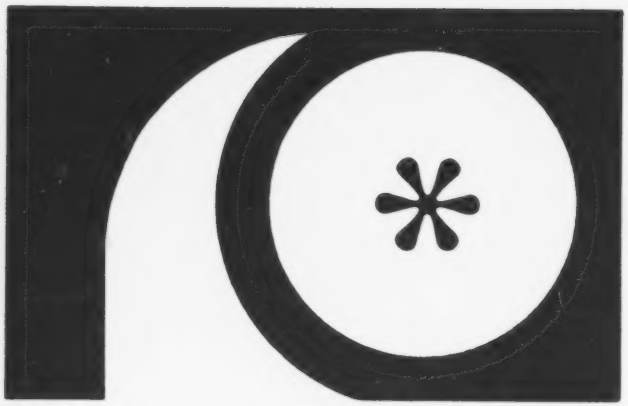
Green tall banana tree swaying
back and forth in the wind,
with no fruit,
waiting for the next time.

Diana
Kahuku High School

Darkness

I sit in a dark empty room
with only my shadow
I see dangling people from the walls
They tell me, "Come and join us
behind the long dark wall."

Stacey
Kahuku High School



Dana Naone

At the Kamehameha Preparatory Department, I was astonished and delighted by the vitality of the students. I should say -- vitality and innocence: both qualities inform their poems in a very natural way.

I purposefully play down any seriousness about having to write a poem. I am more concerned about them having fun using language to express themselves rather than be self-conscious about the "art" of writing a poem. This doesn't mean that what comes out of the exercises they write is not to be taken seriously. On the contrary, I think that whatever they write is useful: it brings to light the way in which they perceive the world, and how they view themselves.

Every poem written informs us about the universe and ourselves in some way, often bringing to our attention something we hadn't noticed before the poem was written.

THIS IS THE MAGIC OF POETRY, IT GIVES US
HINTS OF THE MARVELOUSNESS OF THE UNIVERSE.

I tell my students to imagine that we are all positioned on a huge web with threads connecting us to everyone and everything else in the room. I then ask them to extend that out to everything outside the classroom (trees, buildings, clouds, street signs, animals) -- to everything in the universe .....

. . . . . .

NOTE: All poems in this section were written by intermediate and high school students at the Kamehameha Schools.

I suggest that if we are connected to everything around us by invisible threads, maybe we could begin to feel ourselves moving out along those threads.....

the point of this exercise in imagination is to introduce the idea of getting in touch with all things -- ultimately getting in touch with oneself.....

Whatever it is inside that allows poems to be written is not petty and small, but a part of the self that is luminous and able to encompass all things. I'm really talking about two things at once:

MOVING INWARD (GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE SELF)

and

MOVING OUTWARD (FEELING ONE'S SELF IN TOUCH WITH EVERYTHING IN CREATION)

Both of these directions can be followed at the same time. This is my understanding of what is important in writing poetry.

The first day we talked about what poetry is -- or what we thought was essential to it. Among other things that we discussed were what I consider essential aspects of poetry: "Energy" and "Creation." (The idea that poems come from somewhere, from an infinite, inexhaustible source and wellspring that is within each of us, and that each poem is an act of creation in that it never existed before, something new brought into the world.)

Since dreams are highly imaginative (dream imagery is often vivid), and dreams don't make sense by ordinary waking standards, I thought it would be a good way to get the students off and writing.

At night I dream of Oli-oxe's
Huge, large shape
Plowing me down
In the grassie field

-a 7th grader

I dreamed of a glass-clear surrounding,
Within a small helpless child, unknowing,
Unaware
Of the dangerous fire-breathing dragon lurking,
Waiting
The heat of its breath felt clear through my dream veil.

-a high school student

I asked the students to extend their vision and imagine what they could see if they had a "third eye." A high school student wrote:

I watched my musky caviar dog
Surf a crashing wave
On a sunshine pogo stick.
And when it began raining rubies on him
I caught the glistening jewels
And my lavender fingertips
Bloomed marigolds.

I watched the new-mown grass
Un-mow itself
Till it was all busy beautiful again.

I watched the blue green yellow
Red robin's eggs
Hatch baby cocker spaniels.

I watched aurora borealis nursing a newborn fawn.

-Libby

We talked about making associations. These were some of the similes received from 7th & 8th grade students:

Personalities are like snowflakes - with no
identical twin.

The water is smooth as a rabbit's fur.

The moon is like a mistress in disguise
luring lovers' faces to the sky.

A high school student wrote this poem after a discussion of similes, metaphors and images:

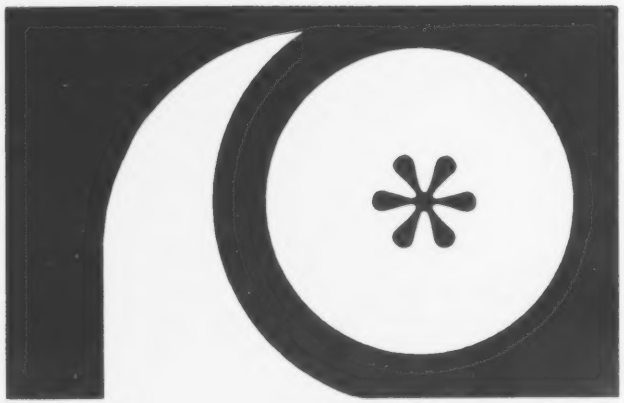
You know when you're there and not here all at once?
A gangster in a penguin's suit tips you in cement,
sneering out of the corner of his mouth, "Your time is up, kid."
Cement hardening is like the Avon facial mask
Godzilla style.
Living within and not living.
Inhaling deflowered garlic
Chipping nail polish colored underside
Tongue pink with a pick axe.
Then, the sneer hardens, and cement merges
with the blood,
And our eyes fade grey like sidewalks.

-a high school student

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL WRITING EXERCISE AT KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS WAS THE ONE I CALL "I AM NOT I". WE BEGAN BY READING THE JUAN RAMON JIMENEZ POEM "I AM NOT I" AND SECTIONS FROM ROBERT BLY'S "AN EXTRA JOYFUL CHORUS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE READ THIS FAR" (SLEEPERS JOINING HANDS). I THEN ASKED THE CLASSES TO WRITE A POEM ABOUT THE "I" THEY IDENTIFIED WITH, OR ELSE TO WRITE WHAT THEY THOUGHT THE "I" WAS NOT - OR A COMBINATION OF THE TWO. THE FOLLOWING POEM CAME OUT OF THIS EXERCISE:

I am one ant in an endless cavity of an anthole,
at least outwardly.
I am a falling star, remembered in that
illuminating moment, and then forgotten,
at least outwardly.
I am the stagnant puddle in unleavened concrete,
drops hurled to the frying hot pavement as we step off the bus.
At least outwardly
I could defeat Attila the Hun singlehandedly
By just showing my face. At least outwardly.
I am Al Capone pursued by J. Edgar Hoover. Really.
I am the Johnstown Flood, decapitating a man when
My floods reach out and slice his neck
With the florescent light that hangs above. Really.
I am Sigmund Freud's best and first patient. Really.
I am a name chisled out in a school hall, and
When the building drops, I will still be there. Really.
I am a person with three friends. And I would die for them. Really.

-Cindy
a high school student



Lorraine Flanders

The beautiful BREATH-TAKING ... exhale, inhale drive from mauka to mauka between Honokaa and Kohala every-day .... by the fire late into the night, reading, thinking, writing-typing, then sunrise descent

d o w n over & u p.

The graceful grazing skirt of these mountains unraveling into the sea evoked a few hearty WOWs from this appreciative poet! Not to mention putting me in a suitably inspired mood to teach.

****

I've made some discoveries in five Big Island schools, both elementary and secondary levels, and I want to pass along the things that have worked .... and the poems.

This is my ever-changing-constantly-crystalizing approach: I really like to come on to the kids as if I'm after something that's already there, something that they are far closer to than I am. I tell them, "Of course you have your own thoughts AND your own store of knowledge!" After all this "you can do it" energy, the kids are usually anxious to splash right into the different projects with confidence. This introduction works for me and is usually received with OBVIOUS approval, they seem to pick up that I believe in them, which helps them believe in themselves. One class even clapped (for themselves ?) when I said, "...and I don't think anyone can teach you what you already know!"

I TRIED DOING "FOUND POEMS" WITH THE THIRD GRADERS AT LAUPAHOEHOE, BECAUSE THESE YOUNGER KIDS ARE NOT AS EQUIPPED TO COME UP WITH WORDS OUT OF THEIR OWN VOCABULARY, AND THEY ARE INSTANT POETIC-MASTERS WITH GIVEN WORDS.

THE DAY BEFORE THIS PROJECT I ASKED EACH OF THEM TO BRING A BOOK (ANY BOOK) TOMORROW. THE IDEA WAS TO TAKE A WORD OR LINE FROM VARIOUS PAGES - SKIPPING BACKWARD AND FORWARD IN THEIR BOOKS - AND THUS WRITE SOME INTERESTING LINES ON THEIR PAPERS. THEN WE WORKED ON DROPPING AND ADDING AND ARRANGING THE "FOUND" WORDS INTO A POEM. FROM THE SUCCESSFUL RESULTS, I GATHER THAT THERE IS AN INTUITIVE-POETIC-EAR THAT LISTENS FOR THE SPACES ... AND THE RHYTHM THAT FALLS AND RISES THERE.

****

"FOUND POEMS"

I AM A TROUBLE-MAKER
I ARRIVE LOUDLY
HOUSEHOLD GERMS KILL ME.

-Stephen

I have felt lonely
forgotten or even left-out
set apart from the rest of the world
sitting on the stone
Oh crab
Soul
is love
proud of your color
The sun that warms you - warms me
the lost key
the reason for the pelican
the real ugly duckling
I have a very thick beauty.

-Rhonda

SOMETIMES IT TAKES A BOY
YEARS AND YEARS
OF STEADY GROWING
TO BECOME BIG ENOUGH
TO MATCH THE NAME
THAT HIS PARENTS GAVE HIM.

-Kate

I encourage working together and never discourage it no matter how much raucousness it sometimes leads to. The people who work alone do so anyway and noise doesn't seem to bother them much.

"TRANSLATIONS" turned out some of my favorite poems. It is a great exercise to do in partners. I chose a German poem, the students were asked to read it and, on the basis of what the strange-sounding words made them think of, write their "translations." The room gargled with sounds and sentences that seemed upside down and inside out.

HALFTE DES LEBENS

The German poem began:

MIT GELBEN BIRNEN HANGET
UND VOLL MIT WILDEN ROSEN
DAS LAND IN DEN SEE,
IHR HOLDEN SCHWANE ...

And their "translations" varied ...

****

"TRANSLATIONS"

Half a Lisbin

Meat is sold by the gallon
in Brian's hang-out
unvaluable meat is wild rooster
da land is unseen
in the hidden swamp
thinking of decaying
in hell's slaughter.

-Robert & Wendell, grade 6
Mountain View Elementary

My Goat

My goat Ben has a habit of
eating wild roses at the school
and the thick thorns bruise him
(the days are hot in Honolulu)
When Mr. Wilson saw Winter
the roses died
so my goat didn't have anything
to eat,
but the wind
blew leaves to my goat.

-Dean & Owen, grade 6
Mountain View Elementary

****

Another approach I used with the elementary classes was "DIRECTIONS." (It could be used by any age group.) It goes like this: Write out directions teaching someone HOW TO: fall asleep * scream * laugh * cry * be brave * make a rainbow **** Don't take anything for granted; imagine the reader knows nothing and you must provide perfectly understandable * easy-to-follow DIRECTIONS.

How to Make a Rainbow

You need lots of colors
Mix them together...
go to the end of the earth
and start spilling as you climb up.

-Teri, grade 6

How to Laugh

Get a box and
catch someone's
laughing. Put it in
a bottle, add water
tell someone to
tell a funny joke
and catch that joke.
Put it in a bottle-
mix it quickly then
pour it over a sad
person, he'll start
laughing.

-Phyllis, grade 5

How to Laugh

You get someone's laugh
and put it in a shell
and put sand in the shell
and when someone comes to your house,
bring the shell out,
and tell them to listen.

-Kimberly, grade 6

****

The 8th graders (at Kohala) were beautiful, the class was full of friendships. This group made me feel like trying totally new things. I did. I told them I wanted them to go on a journey through their mind by starting out in a hall which is lined with doors that lead to different places...I started them down the hall by directing them to different places where they were to go and get something or feel something ... "go to a noisy place ... to a comfortable place ... a colorful place, etc."... leading further back to where the doors are not labeled .... I felt so relaxed and though I wasn't sure what kind of poems this would get, it was evident that they were getting into the trip .....!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I'M SUFFERING FROM SMOTHERNESS !

-Jeannie

Deep in the wilderness, the wind is
angry and cold. You can hear it
in the crowded trees.
During the night you can still hear the wind
the trees and bushes never sleep,
as the stars shine through the clear night sky,
the wind keeps flapping.

-Elmer

I am always there
waiting
trying to follow and remember the
openings,
frozen and forced to shape things.
Lost between pretending
and holding onto the facts.

-Jody

Ginger started hiding her real wishes
in the back of her turning mind
-she was a restless person.

-Ginger

In practically every class there's been a lot of exchanging papers and sifting through the stack. There's always the kid who slips his paper secretly into the stack like a card-trick, but I've never seen anyone ruffle their feathers to defend the stack from visitors. They seem to really enjoy each other's work saying "READ JANE'S" etc....when I read through some out loud. I try to get it across to them that if they can keep themselves interested in what they're writing, they're on the right track.

I have one more project that worked so beautifully I'd like to share it exactly as I presented it. I ran off a ditto instruction-example that went like this:

KEEP IN MIND WHILE YOU'RE WRITING TODAY, THAT ONE ACTION CAN LEAD TO A SERIES OF OTHERS - A STORY OR POEM CAN TAKE SURPRISING TWISTS IN MANY DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS - AND ONE STORY OR POEM IS OFTEN MADE BY CHOOSING ONE POSSIBILITY OUT OF MANY.

1. IMAGINE A CHARACTER OR THING IN A SITUATION OF SOME SORT.

   Sue is in the bathtub.

2. THEN GIVE THIS CHARACTER TWO POSSIBLE WAYS OF ACTING OR TWO THINGS THAT COULD HAPPEN IN THIS SITUATION.

   She could drown.
   She could get out and dry.

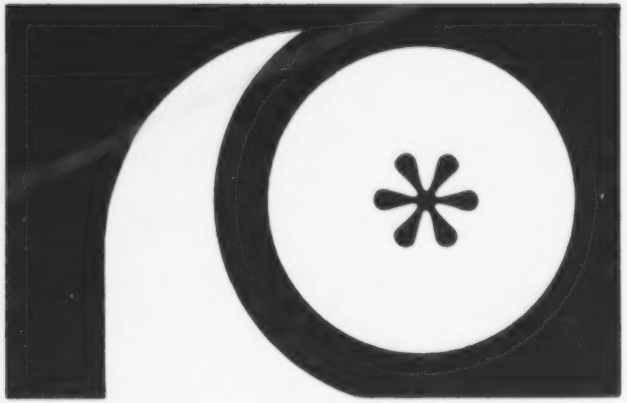
3. REPEAT THIS ACTION BY CHOOSING ONE OF THE TWO POSSIBILITIES - EXPAND THIS INTO THE NEXT SITUATION.

THEN I GAVE SOME EXAMPLES VERBALLY ASKING FOR "SITUATION" SUGGESTIONS FROM THE CLASS. I REALLY LIKED THE POEMS THAT CAME FROM THIS!

Jane is sitting
1) She could get up.
2) She could break the chair.
She lands on the floor. Burt Reynolds comes in to help her up.
1) She could let him.
2) She could ask him to autograph her nose. So now she has to cross her eyes to see this autograph.
1) They may get stuck.
2) She could use a hand mirror.
She looks in the mirror and it breaks.
1) She could buy a new mirror.
2) She could try plastic surgery.
She's in the hospital.
The doctor isn't listening when she explains what kind of plastic surgery she wants.
1) She could scream at him.
2) She could suffer the consequences if he does something wrong.
The doctor puts her nose on upside-down.
1) She could sue him.
2) She could thank him.
She thanks him because now she doesn't have to worry about seeing Burt Reynolds.
He's upside-down.

-Sharon
Kohala High School

AFTER CLASS ON MY LAST DAY, A BOY ASKED ME IF I WAS AN ART TEACHER. HE'D BEEN WRITING FOR ME FOR THREE DAYS, I GUESS HE THOUGHT HE WAS PAINTING !!!!



Mel Takahara

all the time, i try to keep myself open to loving the people in the classroom. i know i'm there because i love the poem. but in the classroom, what matters is the people. i feel an exchange between people must happen before they start writing poems for each other. i know a workshop has succeeded when i realize suddenly that we have begun writing poems to each other.

The Haku Mele O Hawaii concludes with Mel Takahara's poem, "The Waiting Child." Written to the children he met while teaching in the Poets-in-the-Schools program, it captures the poet's experience in Hawaii's classrooms.

THE WAITING CHILD

at first i was
not used to
taking a green
tunnel into a child's heart
but by the second day
i began to suspect
whose heart it really was

the third time
i went anxious
to meet the waiting
child who told me of
a dream i had
bright grinning
at my surprise

fourth! day
green
the tunnel no longer
weeps the children
pull me laughing
to an old room
wrapped in pastures
and the same dark row
of trees cows
have been gazing at
for hours before
the arrival we dream
of wild ducks
and horses
blood
and water
pebbles
and five

days happen
as if nothing
suddenly real
ends. Now

gazing
at the dark row how
        i dream
                of bursting
through wrappings and pastures
                of unbroken grass
                        frantic to find
                                a child still there
waiting

ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mel Takahara's poem, "The Waiting Child," first appeared in the Spring, 1975 issue of The Hawaii Review.

In addition to their own ingenuity, the poets in this anthology are particularly indebted to two sources for their teaching ideas: Kenneth Koch, who has published several books on teaching poetry in the classroom, the best-known being Wishes, Lies and Dreams, and the Teachers and Writers Collaborative of New York, whose books and newsletters each contain many helpful and workable suggestions.

Hundreds of pages of good work were produced during the two years covered in this booklet. It was very difficult to select the few presented here, for many worthy poets and poems had to be left out.